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1694

The Dean of *Peterborough's*

S E R M O N

Before the

L O R D - M A Y O R,

A T

St. Bridget's Church in Easter-Week,

1 6 9 4.

GOODFELLOW

Ashhurst Mayor,

Martis xvij. die April. 1694.

Annoq; RRs. & Reginae,

Willielmi & Mariae, Angl.

&c. sexto.

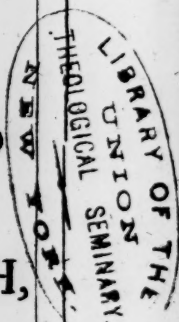
THis Court doth desire Dr. Freeman,
Dean of Peterborough, to Print his
Sermon, preached before the Lord Mayor,
Aldermen, and Governors of the several
Hospitals of this City, at the Parish Church
of St. Bridget's on Tuesday in Easter-Week
last.

GOODFELLOW.

A
S E R M O N
Preached before the
RIGHT HONOURABLE the
L O R D - M A Y O R,
A N D
Court of Aldermen,
A T
St. *B R I D G E T*'s C H U R C H,
On *Tuesday* in *Easter-Week*, 1694.

By S A. F R E E M A N, D. D. Dean of *Peterborough*,
and Chaplain in Ordinary to Their Majesties.

L O N D O N:
Printed for *Ric. Chiswell* at the *Rose and Crown* in
St. Paul's Church-Yard. 1694.



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TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
Sir William Ashhurst,
LORD-MAYOR
OF THE
CITY of LONDON.

My Lord,

IN obedience to the Order of your Court, I have publish'd this Sermon, and heartily pray it may have those good Effects for which it was both Preach'd and Publish'd: And having this Opportunity, I beg leave to let Your Lordship know the grateful sense all good men have of Your vigorous Care and Endeavours to give a stop to that Profaneness and Lewdness of Manners that are grown to so great a head amongst us. The Act of Parliament that gives Liberty to Dissenters in the use of their several Modes of Worship, was, I am sure, never design'd to give men liberty to have no Religion at all;

The Epistle Dedicatory.

all; and yet this I fear, as to too many, is the sad effect of it. It were to be wish'd that all men could be perswaded to worship God with one Mouth, and one Heart, after that most Excellent Form Establish'd in our Church, the Best and Purest of Churches; yet is it far better to worship God after any form, than not to worship him at all, than to live in an open neglect and contempt of his Worship. May Your Lordship go on, by Your own Example, to encourage Regular and Uniform Devotion, and by a due Execution of the Laws, to suppress Irreligion and Immorality. This, Their Majesties have often declar'd, to be Their Will and Pleasure: By this Your Lordship will do the greatest Service to Their Crown and Government: This will not fail to procure the Blessing of God upon this great City, and secure to Your Lordship Peace and Honour both here and for ever. I am,

My LORD,

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

most Obedient Servant,

SA. FREEMAN.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

Lord Mayor, &c.

St. MATT. 25. 46.

— *But the Righteous into Life Eternal.*



OUR Blessed Saviour having in the foregoing verses given us an account of the Proceedings of the last and dreadful Day of Judgment, and the different Fates, to which both good and bad (whom he there describes under the Characters of Sheep and Goats) shall be adjudg'd and sentenc'd; sums up the whole Discourse in the words I have read unto you.

These,

These, that is, the Goats on his left hand, the unrighteous and uncharitable, shall go away into everlasting Punishment; But the Righteous, that is, the Sheep on his right hand, the Good and Charitable, into Life Eternal.

I am at present to discourse on the latter of these, the ~~happy State~~ and Condition of Righteous and Charitable Persons in the other World: And for the better understanding of it, it is necessary to shew you these Three things.

I. Who is meant by the Righteous.

II. Wherein this Eternal Life consists; that is, the promis'd Reward of Righteous Persons.

III. The Truth and Certainty of this Proposition; That Righteous and Charitable Persons shall be for ever Happy in the other World; *But the Righteous into Life Eternal.*

I. Who is meant by the Righteous.

Now, altho Righteousness strictly taken, signifies only the virtue of Justice and Honesty,

neſty, yet is it in Scripture frequently uſ'd in a more large Senſe, and has reſpect to theſe *Three* things;

1. To the Works and Actions of Men; Not but that we are bound to believe aright, and be very careful what Opinions and Tenets we take up; eſpecially that they be neither immoral, nor unpeaceable; that the Articles of our Faith be well grounded, and contain nothing in them, but what is founded on, and agreeable with the Word of God. But that which the Scripture makes the trueſt ſign and mark of a Righteous Man, are righteous Works, as being not ſo cheap nor ſo eaſy as Profeſſion and Belief.

He that doth good, ſays St. John, is of God: and again, My little Children let no man deceive you, in this point eſpecially, He that doth Righteouſneſs is righteous, even as he is righteous.

Epist. John
3.v. 11.

1 *Epistl. John*
ch. 3.v. 7:

2. To the Univerſality of a man's Duty. He that fails in any one part of his duty, is unrighteous to God, becauſe all are God's due; Here can be no commuting a duty,

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no

Chap. I. v. 6.

no making amends for the breach of one Law by the strict observance of another, because we are under equal Obligations to all. For this reason *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* are said in *St. Luke's Gospel*, to be both *righteous before God*, because they *walked in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless*.

3. To the chiefest and most principal part of a man's Duty, Charity and good Works; All the good things we possess in this world, being not so properly given as lent us by God, (he being the true Owner and Proprietor of them, and we only his Stewards) we are oblig'd to put them out to those uses which the great Lord of the Universe gave us them for; that is to say, after we have in some competent measure provided for our own Needs and Conveniences, and the comfortable Support of our Families, to dispense the overplus to the Relief and Succour of those that want it; I will not take upon me to adjust the exact measure and proportion that is to be observ'd in the Exercise of this Duty;
St. Paul's

St. Paul's rule is, according to our Ability, as God hath prosper'd us; the Jews, besides the Tythes payable every year to the Priest, were oblig'd every Third year to set apart another Tythe for the poor; which being resolv'd into a yearly Rate, amounts to a Thirtieth part of our yearly Income; and certainly the Gospel, that hath enlarg'd the Duty of Charity as to the Object, all Mankind, has not lessen'd it as to the quantity; I know it's possible for Men to exceed in this Duty, though (that very rarely happens:) To be sure there is far greater danger that they fall short in it; and they that do so, are indeed unjust Stewards of their Master's Goods, and deprive the poor and miserable of that God hath given them a right to; and therefore Solomon in the 3d. of the Proverbs and the 27th. verse, speaking of the poor and necessitous, (as both the * Septuagint Version, and the following words, oblige us to explain it) thus advises, Withhold not good from them to whom it is due; or as it is in the Hebrew, who are the Lords and Owners of it. Accordingly, Alms-giving is frequently

I Cor. 16. 2.

Deut. 14. 22.

Verse 29.

* מִן הַשְּׁמִינִי
ד' מִסֵּדֵי עֵץ
שֶׁנֶּהֱ

Deut. 24. 13.
Psal. 112. 9.

still'd Righteousness both in the *Old and New Testament*: And this is the particular meaning of the word Righteous in the Text, it having relation to the Sheep mention'd in the former part of the Chapter, that shall stand on Christ's right hand at the day of Judgment, whom our Saviour there describes by their works of Charity.

And though he instances only in those that respect the Body, *feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, entertaining strangers*; yet are there others that respect the Soul, and are no less to be observed by us, such as instructing the ignorant, confirming the weak, convincing the erroneous, reclaiming the vicious, raising the sorrowful and dejected spirit; in our station undertaking the patronage of oppress'd Virtue and Religion; and when the Case requires it, parting with our Estates, and laying down our Lives for the Brethren, that is, in defence of the Gospel of Christ, which is the greatest good we can do for other Mens Souls.

All necessary and excellent Acts of Charity; and yet still there are greater, which
being

being of a more Publick Nature and Design, lasting longer, and doing more good, do outshine these: I mean the Founding and Endowing Publick Houses of Charity, whereby not only some few Single Persons, but Multitudes, not only the present but future Generations are benefited and obliged; whether they be *Hospitals* for the Maintenance of those that cannot help themselves, or *Work-houses* for the Employment of those that can; or *Places of Correction* for the Punishment of those that will not when they are able; or *Free-Schools* for the Education of poor Children, whereby many are made to become useful Members of the Community, that otherwise might have been a burden, if not a pest unto it.

I know this sort of Charity is very much abused in the World, (as well as Faith corrupted) but whilst I plead not for those Popish Places of Retirement, where under the pretence of Devotion, Idleness is indulg'd, and Luxury pamper'd, and all sorts of Lewdness too commonly practis'd; yet this hinders not, but that I may be an Advocate for those of Protestants, who
answer.

answer the great and good Ends for which they were design'd, and daily administer support and comfort to the poor and miserable.

Presently upon the beginning of the Reformation, there was an huge outcry rais'd by the Church of *Rome*, against the Blessed Instruments of it, as if they had been declar'd Enemies to all good Works, because they could not but condemn their Doctrine of the *Merit* of them; they granted we could not want Faith, whilst every one, they said, might have a Creed of his own devising; but as for Charity, that had taken wing, and left the Heretical World.

To confute both these groundless and malicious Slanders, our very Prudent as well as Pious Reformers took this effectual Course; To declare their Faith, and to put a stop to the Designs and Whims of Factious and Melancholy Men, they put out the Articles of our Religion: And to justify their Charity, and encourage the Practice of it, they put that incomparable Prince, King *Edward* the Sixth upon founding, or at least improving

proving the Famous Hospitals of this City; And blessed be God, so many have been the Noble and Great Souls in every Generation since, so large and magnificent their Benefactors, that we are able to vye with *Rome* in this particular; and if Dr. *Willet* Synop. Pap. 1219, 1224. informs us aright, to shew more and greater Schools and Hospitals built and endowed in *England* in these last Hundred and Thirty Years since the Reformation, than can be shewn in any the like Number of Years before, when *England* was in Subjection to Popery.

II. Wherein this Eternal Life consists, that is, the promised reward of Righteous Persons.

That by Eternal Life, is meant Eternal Happiness, appears in that it's oppos'd to *Everlasting Punishment* in the former part of the Verse, promised as a thing infinitely desirable, and as the Reward of Righteousness, upon which account it is elsewhere call'd a Crown of Life. *Blessed is the man* James 1. 12. *that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall*

shall receive a crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. But wherein this Eternal Happiness consists, is not so easy to discover or express. It's above our Thoughts, and above our Apprehensions; it is the participation of the Joys of God, and of the Inheritance of our Blessed Redeemer.

Oh Happy State!

Where I shall be freed from all Sin, and from all Sorrow; where there shall be no Evils from without, no Impurities from within to disturb my peace; nothing but Eternal Day without Night, perpetual Calm without Storm.

Where I shall live for ever in the presence of God, and have my enlarged understanding entertain'd with a clear Knowledge of his Nature, Works, and all the wise Designs of his Grace and Providence; and where this Knowledge shall have that influence on my Soul, as to transform me into his Nature, so that I shall not only see God, but become my self a God-like Creature; not only

only partake of the Glory of Heaven, but be made my self a part of its Glory.

Where I shall ever be with our Lord, and be an Eye witness of the happy Change of his past doleful Circumstances, and be transported with unspeakable Ravishments to see him who was so ignominiously and barbarously treated on Earth for our sakes, exalted at the Right Hand of God to the highest pitch of Glory and Majesty.

Where I shall be associated with Blessed Angels, and Spirits of Just Men made perfect; and passing through all the Regions of the Blessed, shall meet with none but Holy and Charitable Souls, of the same Mind and Temper with my self, freely conversing together, adoring the Infinite Perfections of God, and congratulating each others Happiness in the enjoyment of him.

Where with all the Blessed Inhabitants of that place, being united together in holy Love, I shall be engaged in a constant Exercise of Love, Joy, Gratitude, and Admiration, in chanting forth Songs of Praise

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and

and Thanksgiving to him that sits on the throne, and to the Lamb that was slain; to God even our Father, and to the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath loved us, and washed away our sins in his own blood.

Where, lastly, all this Happiness shall be Eternal; where I shall every day be more and more advancing in the Knowledge and Love of the Infinite God; and as they grow and increase, so will my Joys multiply and spring in upon me; every farther degree of the Knowledge and Love of God will create in me new and fresh Additions of Delight and Pleasure; and because I can never come to an end in knowing and loving of God, I can never come to an end of my Happiness.

All this, and infinitely more, is comprehended in that *Eternal Life*, that's here made the Reward of Righteous Persons:

1 Cor. 2. 9. *For neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it ever entered into the heart of man to conceive, the great things God hath prepared for them that love him; and therefore is it fitter for us to hope for these things than to discourse of them, whilst we are in this tabernacle, and see*

1 Cor. 13. 12.

see but as in a glass darkly. But then it is to be consider'd, that tho the Gospel promises us an Happiness that we cannot comprehend, yet it gives us all the reason in the World to believe the Certainty of it. And this leads me to the

III. Third Particular, To shew the Truth and Certainty of this Proposition, That Righteous and Charitable Persons shall be for ever happy in the other World; *but the Righteous into Life Eternal.*

We have some short tastes of it here in the peace and satisfaction of our Minds, there being much of God and Heaven in every act of Charity, and in the perfection of Charity consists the Heavenly State.

We are assur'd of it from the Justice of Divine Providence, which making little or no difference betwixt Good and Bad Men in this World, is obliged to make a greater and more remarkable one in the next.

It is told us by God himself, preach'd by his Holy Son; confirm'd by Miracles; Christ himself died to purchase it; and thousands of Martyrs have died to witness it.

But the Argument I shall insist on as more proper at present, is taken from our Saviour's Resurrection; This is the main support of our future hopes, the great Pledge and Assurance of our own Resurrection and Immortality.

1 Cor. 15.

That our Saviour did arise from the Dead, I shall not need, as I justly might, to lay the stress of the Evidence upon the Divine Authority of the Holy Scriptures; but giving them only that Credit that is due to every Common History of Matter of Fact, here is enough to satisfy the most Sceptical and Cavilling Person. For, says the Apostle, *He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, then of five hundred brethren at once.* All Persons of clear Understandings, unspotted Virtue, unquestionable Prudence, who could promise themselves no advantage by forging it, who cannot be supposed to invent a Lye to propagate that Gospel that damns the Liar; who were enabled by a Divine Power to work Miracles for the Confirmation of what they said; and who at last when they were not suffered any longer to live to publish it, laid down their
their

their Lives, and sealed it with their Blood. Besides these, there are two other great Evidences of their Integrity in relating this matter, which being not so common, I shall propose them a little more at large; and (the First) is, That they have not in their Writings conceal'd their own faults, nor their Master's Sufferings; both which, no doubt, they would have done, had their design been no other than by all manner of ways, right or wrong, true or false, to advance their own and their Master's Glory. It was not much for St. *Matthew*'s Credit, that before his Conversion he was a *Publican*, a most hated and dishonourable Office; and yet this does St. *Matthew* only, of all the *Evangelists*, transmit to Posterity. Would it not have been more for St. *Peter*'s Reputation, to have spoke but little of his shameful Fall and Denial of his Master, and more largely of his deep Sorrow and Repentance? When on the the contrary, St. *Mark*, who wrote his Gospel from St. *Peter*'s mouth, has at large in all its Circumstances describ'd and related his Fall, but very sparingly mention'd his Repentance, saying only, *Peter wept*, when

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as the other *Evangelists* add, *he wept bitterly*: So also in respect of their Master, had it been only to advance his Honour, that they contriv'd the story of his Resurrection, when there was no such thing; How came they to give us so particular an Account of his Disgraces and Sufferings? especially the Purple Robe, the Scepter of Reed, the Mockings and Scourges, and the other shameful Circumstances they have recorded of his Condemnation and Execution? If their business had been only to invent and Romance, certainly it had been more for their Master's Renown, to have left it upon Record to succeeding Ages, That he suffer'd not at all; but that after he had by a Divine Power, working Miracles, and doing Execution on his Enemies, establish'd his Kingdom in the world, he return'd back again to Heaven, with all the Ornaments of Triumph and Glory; But impartially relating the whole story of our Saviour's Life, and Death, and Resurrection, the disgraceful as well as the glorious part, it's no little proof, that they spake truth in both, and are to be believ'd in the whole. Again, we find their Testimony of this matter

ter confirm'd by an eminent Jew, *Josephus* by name, who liv'd in or about that time; his words are these, *ὁπότε τις ἦν αὐτῶ τῷ ἡγεμῶν*, *Antiq. 1. 18.*
There was at that time, saith he, a wise man,^{c. 4.} if it be lawful to call him a man, who did many Miracles, was an Instructor of those that willingly entertain'd the Truth; this was Christ, who being put to death, rose again the Third day. There are indeed those that will have this Testimony of *Josephus* to be forg'd, and to be falsely thrust into his Writings by some Christians for the advantage of their Cause. But is there any shew of reason to suspect this? Is it to be imagin'd, that our Saviour should make so great a noise in the world, draw after him so great a number of Disciples, be the Institutor of a new Sect of Religion, do many miraculous Works, and yet so diligent an Historian as *Josephus*, who liv'd at that time, and carefully collected every remarkable Occurrence, should not make the least mention of him? And now if he has not done it here, he has done it no where; this being the only place in his whole History where any thing is said of him. But is it likely *Josephus* should write thus, *This was the Christ?*

Christ? Is not this to write more like a Confessor than an Historian? more like a Christian than a Jew? I answer, Is it necessary that *Josephus* should write his own Sense? May he not be suppos'd to write according to the Opinion of others, and what the generality of the people said and reported of him? As well may *Pilate* be suppos'd to believe *Jesus* to be King of the Jews, because he caus'd that Title, *Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews*, to be set over his Cross; as *Josephus*, to believe him to be the Christ, because he in his History says, *This was the Christ*; when both spake, not what they themselves believ'd, but what others generally spake; *This was the Christ*, that is, this was call'd the Christ.

So undeniable you see is the Truth of our Saviour's Resurrection; and if Christ be risen, we may also be certain, that we shall at last be rais'd by him; for he arose not for himself only, but as the First-fruits of them that slept; and therefore the Apostle argues with great Reason, when he says, *If Christ be risen from the dead, how say some among you, that there is no Resurrection?* And on the contrary, *If we*

1 Cor. 15.

1 Thef. 4 14.

we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. What greater Assurance can good Men have, that their Bodies shall not for ever sleep in the Grave, but shall at last be reunited to their Souls, and both Soul and Body live for ever in unspeakable Bliss and Glory? Christ raising himself from the dead, and ascending up into Glory at the right hand of God, gives us an uncontrollable Demonstration that he is able to raise us also; and then passing his Word and Promise for it, that he would raise us and exalt us to the same Glory with himself, we can have as little reason to doubt his willingness to do it, as his Power; Thus he says, *I am the Resurrection and the Life*; and again, *He that believeth on me, shall not perish, but have everlasting Life, and I will raise him at the last day.* Blessed therefore, for ever blessed be our Lord Jesus, who hath brought Life and Immortality to light by his Gospel. Everlasting Praises to his Name, who hath begotten us again to this lively hope by his Resurrection from the dead. Now I know that my Redeemer lives, and this I know also, that if he lives,
D I shall

John 6. 40.

1 Pet. 1. 2.

I shall live also ; and though it does not yet appear what I shall be, yet this I know, *that when he appears, I shall be like him.* Oh blessed state of Christianity ! we are not now left in the dark, as was the condition of the Heathen world, with some uncertain guesSES and conjectures of a future state, grounded upon nice and subtle, and as to the people, unintelligible Arguments, but have it demonstrated even to outward sense by our Saviour's Resurrection ; This is that which exalts the Religion of Christ above the Jewish or any other that ever was in the world, that will effectually recommend it to all Mankind in all Ages, that it hath given us a plain and easy, a short and compendious, but withal, a full and clear and conclusive Demonstration of a Blessed Immortality.

It remains now only, That from what I have said, I perswade you, if I can, to the sincere practice of universal Righteousness, especially this Noble and Principal part of it, Alms and Charity.

I have already shew'd you the Blessed Reward of so doing, both as to the greatness

ness and the certainty of it; give me leave for a Conclusion to put you in mind of the great Examples that are gone before you to enjoy it, by whose abundant Charity so many admirable Hospitals have been founded and plentifully endow'd; the blessed Fruits and Effects whereof, are these before you, and many others; So many daily fed and cloath'd, cured of their Maladies, restored to their Wits, put out to beneficial Trades, instructed with great Abilities and Application in several kinds of useful Knowledge and Learning; But I cannot give you a better account of them, than by reading the Report unto you.

A True Report, &c.

By this Report you see how much we are indebted to the Noble Benefactions of our great and generous Ancestors: How much to your Lordship's and Brethren's Care, together with many other worthy Citizens, for their faithful and prudent Management of them: This above all things is the Glory of your City, and I hope it will ever be so.

May God encrease the Number of your Benefactors, may you your selves be of that number.

This is the best way to perpetuate your Memories, to eternize your Names, to bring Honour to your Religion, to demonstrate the sincerity of your Profession, to make our Church become the Envy of *Rome* and the Glory of all Churches.

This is the best way to derive a present Blessing upon your Families, and to entail a Blessing upon your Posterities, to avert the Judgments of God that hang over our heads, and to engage the peculiar and extraordinary Protection of Divine Providence over Their Majesties, this great City, and the whole Nation. *As water quenches flaming fire, so Alms make Atonement for Sin.*

Eccl. 3.30.31.

This will make us like our selves, of a truly humane Temper and Disposition, whose native property it is, to be courteous, helpful, and obliging:

This will make us like the Son of God, who whilst he was here on Earth, was full of the Spirit of Love, Tender-heartedness, and Compassion, going up and down doing Good,

Good, and casting an healing Influence both on the Souls and Bodies of Men.

This will make us like to God himself, by whose most adorable Goodness, the whole Frame of the Creation, the whole Race of Mankind, the rich, the poor, the sound, the unsound Part, were at first made, and have hitherto been sustained.

In sum, Charity is the Flower of all Graces, the Bond of Perfectness, the Soul of Religion, the Nature of God, the Life of Heaven, and the most certain undoubted Way that leads to it.

God many times rewards Charity in this World, and the Posterity of a Righteous Man commonly fare the better for their Father's sake. *I have been young, but now am old,* says the Prophet David, *yet never saw I the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread; that is, nor his Seed begging their Bread, forsaken.* We read in the Second Book of Kings, and the Fourth Chapter, of a Widow-woman and her Children preserved alive, and fed by the Prophet's miraculous encreasing of her Pot of Oyl; which Woman, if we will believe the Rabbins, had been

been Wife to that good Man *Obadiah*, concerning whom we read in the First Book of *Kings*, and the 18th Chapter, That when *Jezebel* cut off the Prophets of the Lord, he hid them by fifty in a Cave, and fed them with bread and water: And their Conjecture is not improbable, the Character the Woman gives of her Husband in the one place, so exactly agreeing to that the Holy Ghost gives of him in the other. Thy servant my husband, says the Woman to *Elisha*, fear'd the Lord; and *Obadiah* feared the Lord greatly, says the other. So great a regard, you see, had God to the Wife and Children of a Charitable Man, that he chuses, rather than they should want, to feed them by a Miracle.

But what are all the good things of this Life to the felicities of the next? What are Riches that have wings, to Immortality? What's a Palace, to Heaven? Here we visit the Sick, and the Spirit of Comfort visits us. We serve our Brethren, and Angels minister to us. We convert a Sinner, and shall shine as Stars. We part with a little Silver, and the hand of Mercy works it, and
turns

turns it into a Crown. We sow Temporal Things, and shall reap Eternal. We build Houses for Outcasts and Orphans, and shall our selves have a Building of God, an House not made with hands, Eternal in the Heavens; *But the Righteous into Life Eternal.*

F I N I S.

I M P R I M A T U R,

April 25. 94.

C. Alston.

E R R A T A.

PAGE 5. line 12. dele *Parenthesis* before *that*, put it before *though*. P. 9.
l. 5. r. *Benefactions*.

Books lately Printed for Richard Chiswell.

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His Four Discourses delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Sarum. Concerning I. The Truth of the Christian Religion. II. The Divinity and the Death of Christ. III. The Infallibility and Authority of the Church. IV. The Obligations to continue in the Communion of the Church. 8vo.

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A T A R R

